



Avoiding weight loss burnout - By Meghan Rabbit

Maybe you've been in awe watching the Biggest Loser contestants sweat off their pounds. But when they head home, they'll face the same temptations that lure us all away from our healthy habits. Here are seven mistakes we all makes—and the secrets to bypassing a backslide.

1 You get down when the scale stalls. Not seeing all-time lows when you strip down and weigh yourself can derail anyone's progress. "As you get closer to your goal weight, the pounds will start coming off more slowly—and it can make you feel like you've lost momentum," says Jenn Burke, fitness manager at the Chesterfield Sport 24 Hour Fitness in Missouri.

The solution: Quit the scale and pull out a measuring tape. If you're still getting a good mix of cardio and strength training, you're likely still losing inches—even if your weight isn't budging, says Burke. And proof of that whittling waistline will help keep you motivated.

2 You get out of "diet" mode. Once you're in your skinny jeans, you may be more likely to hit the buffet with abandon. "When you've reached your goal, it's easier to lose awareness of how many calories are in certain foods," says Janel Bilal, a trainer at the College Grove Magic Johnson Sport in Carson, California.

The solution: Indulge—but make up for it with a workout. When Ali Vincent, Biggest Loser season six winner, gives in to temptation, she makes it a point to sweat off those extra calories. "It's a choice," says Vincent. "Either you make the choice to have the chocolate cake and work out more, or you eat the cake, do nothing, and gain weight."

3 You hit a dreaded plateau and lose your mojo. Months of doing the same cardio and weights circuit may have worked wonders for a while, but eventually, your muscle fibers master those movements and don't need as much energy to do them

(read: your body stops ravaging for extra calories to complete the task). The result? You get frustrated that your go-to routine isn't working anymore.

The solution: Mix things up. To give your body the new stimulus it needs, try something you've never done before. Sign up for a 5-K race if you usually use the elliptical, or use free weights if you're always on the weight machines. Even better: Try a team sport, like volleyball or indoor soccer, to work your muscles in ways that are hard to mimic at the gym.

4 You let outside influences tempt you. Vincent faced this dilemma when she came home from taping The Biggest Loser. "I had to have a lot of conversations with the people I cared about," says Vincent. "Did I still want to hang out with certain friends? Yes. Could we still meet for margaritas and chips? No."

The solution: Rope your crew into your routine. Instead of sedentary activities, like going to the movies, go for a hike or take a dance class. And when it comes to eating out, you call the shots. If someone suggests Chinese, choose a restaurant that also serves Japanese fare so you can opt for sushi instead of General Tso's.

5 You give in to your excuses. You're busy. Stressed. Overworked. The list goes on. And while these are all perfectly acceptable reasons to ditch a workout, it's important to remind yourself that you used to fly in the face of these potential roadblocks when you were totally focused on your goal.

The solution: Schedule workouts you never want to miss, says Bilal. Find a group fitness class that you love so you'll want to make it there every week, or buddy up with a co-worker and sneak a bitch session in at the gym—instead of the cafeteria.

6 You stop rewarding yourself. It's easy to treat yourself to a new pair of jeans when you can't fit into your old clothes. But when your weight loss slows, you might not think to celebrate smaller successes, which

help remind you that you're still doing great.

The solution: Get creative. Book a plane ticket to visit a far-away friend or treat yourself to a massage at your local spa after a month of working out consistently—regardless of what the scale says. "Choose something relaxing," suggests Burke. "You work hard at the gym, so treating yourself to something that'll help you unwind is ideal."

7 You beat yourself up, you backslide. Tired of berating yourself when Monday comes and goes and you haven't "started over?" Too much talking smack about yourself will put a damper on your desire to get back on the wagon.

The solution: Cut yourself some slack. "You have to understand that there will be peaks and valleys in your weight and nutrition, and even if you stumble, you can catch yourself," says Burke. "Give yourself points for the positive changes you've made and then say, 'Okay, I slipped, but I can get right back on the plan.'"

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Gym time and food choices can raise your body's RPM.

Creating a speedy metabolism sets you up for one sweet domino effect. If your body is efficiently converting food into fuel and burning it, you'll shed fat and build muscle. That muscle, in turn, boosts your metabolism even more, so you shed more fat and build more muscle, which...well, you get the idea. The payoff: a lean body for life.

Ready to get your motor revving? Here are 11 tips to help you eat, drink, and move your metabolism into high gear.

Graze All Day

Metabolism is like a camp fire. Eating four to six small meals throughout the day instead of three big ones is like slowly adding logs to your inner burn. "It'll stoke your fire if you eat small meals frequently," says David Grotto, R.D., president of Nutrition Housecall in Chicago and author of *101 Foods That Could Save Your Life*.

Don't Fear Carbs

Dodging carbohydrates leaves your body lacking the fast-burning energy supply that can kick-start your metabolism. Skip too many carbs and your body begins burning muscle, not fat. The best approach is a balance: a diet of about 50 percent to 55 percent carbs (fruits, vegetables, and whole grains, not cookies, chips, and cake), about 20 to 25 percent protein, and 25 to 30 percent fat, Grotto says.



Sip Green Tea

Green tea contains EGCG, or epigallocatechin gallate, an antioxidant. Researchers from the Institute of Human Nutrition found that EGCG taken with caffeine (that's the way it comes in tea) boosted energy expenditure (another term for calorie burn) by almost 4 percent.

Make Yours Water

H2O is your body's lubrication. Without it, your internal machine won't run quite as smoothly. During the day, sip about 13 cups of liquid (we know, it sounds like drinking a bathtub full), and when working out for more than an hour, drink about two to three cups more than that.



Be a Busybody

Fidgeting, pacing while you talk on the phone, or drumming your favorite '80s tune can help burn more calories. Researchers at the Mayo Clinic found that just being on your feet more can burn an additional 350 calories a day.

Add Intervals

On cardio machines such as treadmills, ellipticals, or spin bikes, sprint at close to your maximum for 60 seconds, rest by walking or pedaling slowly for 1 or 2 minutes, then sprint again. Repeat about a half dozen times. If you can't do the full 60 seconds or all the intervals, Trotter suggests starting with 30 seconds and gradually work your way up.

Chill Out

As the seasons change, don't hibernate. Getting out in the cooler weather will help raise your metabolism. Researchers have found that about a quarter of the calories you burn during outdoor winter activities can be attributed to the energy your body uses to heat the air you breathe.



Lighten up

Instead of pumping heavy weights until you are fatigued, Trotter suggests that you opt for more repetitions of lighter weights. To find the ideal weight, determine your one rep max. Then lift three sets of 60 percent of your max for 12 to 20 reps. For example, if 100 pounds is your max on the lat pull-down, dial in 60 pounds.

Row, Row, Row

An RPM-revving machine you may be overlooking is the humble rower. Thirty minutes on this low-impact machine burns almost as many calories as running a 12-minute mile.



Overshoot Your Target

A couple times during your workout, bump your heart rate above your target for 1 or 2 minutes. During most workouts, you want to be at 55 percent to 85 percent of your max, but notching it up higher can also bump your metabolism, Trotter says.

Source: You24. Used with permission.



Go, Fish! Enjoy the grill and lose weight - By Meredith Deeds

Fire up the grill, get creative, and contour the body you want... tastefully.



Pounds Off

The Goal: Enjoy the grill and lose weight at the same time.

Try This Recipe: Grilled mahi-mahi with chipotle salsa

Low in calories, mahi-mahi stands up firmly to grilling, requiring very little oil to prevent sticking. We've paired this mild fish with some hot ingredients not just for their kick—they help burn calories, too.

SERVES 4

1 (14½-OZ) CAN CHOPPED TOMATOES
1 TBSP LIME JUICE, PLUS MORE IF DESIRED
1 CAN CHIPOTLE PEPPER IN ADOBO SAUCE
1 C. DICED SWEET ONION
¼ C. CHOPPED FRESH CILANTRO LEAVES
SALT & FRESHLY GROUND BLACK PEPPER
½ TSP CHILI POWDER

4 (6-OZ) MAHI-MAHI FILLETS (EACH ABOUT 1-INCH THICK)

For Salsa: In a blender, combine tomatoes, lime juice, and chipotle peppers. Puree until smooth, then pour into a bowl. Rinse the onion under cold running water in a colander. Add the onion and cilantro to the salsa, and season with salt and more lime juice, if desired.

For Fish: Heat grill on medium-high. Season both sides of fish with salt, pepper, and chili powder. Brush with olive oil. Grill until center is opaque, about 4 to 5 minutes per side. Serve with salsa on top.

Each serving: 200 calories, 4 ½ g fat, 1 g sat fat, 125 mg cholesterol, 370 mg sodium, 6 g carbohydrate, 2 g fiber, 32 g protein

Power

The Goal: Increase muscle mass without increasing body fat.

LOOK TO THE LEGS. For the best ratio of protein to fat in meat, count the legs: The fewer there are, the leaner the meat. Fish (leg count: zero) is a great source of lean protein.

THE GRASS IS ALWAYS LEANER. Have an emotional attachment to the four-legged? Get hooked on grass-fed beef, available at many supermarkets and online. It's packed with heart-healthy omega-3 fats (60 percent) while lean on artery-clogging saturated fat (less

than 10 percent).

Performance

The Goal: Carb-load for an endurance event.

Timing is everything. It takes 24 to 48 hours to refuel muscle groups, says Jacqueline Berning, Ph.D., sports nutrition consultant for the Denver Broncos and Cleveland Indians. So when it comes to carb-loading, you'll get the real benefit by chowing down 2 or 3 nights before your race instead of just the evening before.

Complexity is key. In his book *Core Performance Endurance*, fitness expert Mark Verstegen says that not any old carb will do. You need complex carbs. It takes longer for your body to break them down so the energy they provide is released gradually instead of in one big burst.

Source: You24. Used with permission.



Workout become a chore? Change it up - By Suzanne Schlosberg



Need to beat big-time boredom? Ultramarathoner Pam Reed reveals how to keep your mind engaged when all your body wants to do is put on the brakes.

"I've never really liked long distances," swears Pam Reed, 48, two-time winner of the Badwater Ultramarathon, a grueling 135-mile race. Yeah. Right.

Yet Reed, author of *The Extra Mile*, insists it's true, and that while she thrives on the challenge of pushing herself farther—literally—than most, she constantly has to negotiate with herself to finish her races.

Exactly how does an avowed long-distancephobe get through 100-milers without losing her mind? And what can she offer the rest of us who are just trying to get through an hour on the elliptical trainer? Here, Reed's best, ultra-tested secrets for keeping your mind engaged and your body in motion.

Break it down. "When I compete in a 100-mile race, in my mind I'm running one mile 100 times," she says. Don't even try to wrap your mind around a long workout; instead, create doable, interim goals, and string them together.

Set back-up goals. "What works best for me is being flexible about what I shoot for, depending on how I'm feeling," says Reed. Her first goal, to finish; her second, to improve her time; her third, to win. Sometimes, all your body can do is finish a workout—and that's okay. It's a goal achieved."

Follow the 15-minute rule. "There are times when I'm just not into it," she says, "but if I just keep going, that feeling usually passes." Boredom will end—but only if you give it a chance to do so. Stick it out for at least 15 minutes before you quit."

Source: You24. Used with permission.

What does your squat say about your fitness? One simple move can help you weed out your weak spots, plus, the best moves and stretches to help your body achieve balance.

Next time you're at the gym and steal a glimpse of yourself in the mirror, don't look away for fear that someone's going to catch you preening. Go ahead and take a nice long look, at least when you squat.

"Watching to see what your body does when you do a squat can give you clues about what you need to work on," says Lisa Martin, a 24 Hour Fitness master trainer in Kaneohe, Hawaii. "When your body is strong and in good shape, your form will be near-perfect. When the body deviates from good form, it's a sign that there's a weakness."

With your feet shoulder-distance apart, toes pointing straight forward, and arms raised above your head, bend at the hips and knees and lower yourself straight down. Repeat three times facing forward, and three times facing sideways. Here's what to watch for—and what to work on depending on what you see in your squat.

From the front

1 **What to watch for:** Your feet and/or knees turn out

What it could mean: Your IT band is tight and your outer glutes—the ones closer to your hips—are weak.

How to stretch: Lie on the floor on your left side and place a foam roller under your body, just above your left knee. Roll up and down slowly along your outer thigh for a minute, pausing at tender spots, then switch sides.

How to strengthen: One-legged squats. Balancing on your left leg, raise your right foot 6 inches off the floor and sit back, bending your left knee, then straightening it. Do 8-12 reps and switch sides; repeat two to three times. To make it tougher, stand on a balance board and/or hold dumbbells.

2 **What to watch for:** Your knees move inward

What it could mean: Your inner thighs are tight and your outer thighs and glutes are weak.

How to stretch: Sit on the floor with the soles of your feet touching each other. Hold the tops of your feet as you press your elbows into your knees, pushing them toward the floor. Hold for 30 seconds, deepening the

stretch on your exhales.

How to strengthen: Loop resistance tubing around your ankles and slide it above your knees. With your knees slightly bent abs tight, sidestep 10 times to your right and then 10 times back to your left.

3 **What to watch for:** Your heels lift up
What it could mean: Your calves are tight

How to stretch: Stand on a step or a bench and balancing on your left leg, keep the ball of your right foot on the step and drop your heel off the side until you feel a stretch in your calf. Hold for 30 seconds, and switch sides.

From the side

1 **What to watch for:** Your torso, arms, and/or head lean forward, and your shoulders shrug

What it could mean: Your upper traps—the muscles at the base of your neck and above your shoulder blades—are tight and your lower traps (just below your upper traps) are weak.

How to stretch: Standing or sitting upright, drop your right ear toward your right shoulder. Slowly circle your head toward the floor, chin toward your chest, and finish when your left ear is near your left shoulder. Repeat, moving in the opposite direction.

How to strengthen: Hold resistance tubing in your hands, arms stretched straight out in front of you, and open your arms to either side. Keep your hands chest high, just below the shoulders while keeping the shoulders depressed throughout the move. Repeat eight to 12 times, opening and closing your arms at the same speed.

2 **What to watch for:** Your low back arches

What it could mean: Your hip flexors are tight and your core is weak.

How to stretch: Lunge with your right foot forward and drop your left knee to the ground. With your hands on your hips, tilt your pelvis up until you feel a stretch in the front of your hip. Repeat on the other side.

How to strengthen: Hold the plank pose, which simultaneously

strengthens your abs and stretches your hip flexors. Get into a modified pushup position, with your forearms resting on the floor, elbows under your shoulders, knees on the floor. On an exhale, straighten your knees so your body is in a straight line. Hold for 30 seconds; little by little, increase the time you spend in this position without resting, up to 2 minutes.

3 **What to watch for:** Your low back rounds

What it could mean: Your hamstrings are tight and your glutes are weak.

How to stretch: Sit with your legs straight out in front of you and your arms raised above your head. Keeping your back flat, reach your arms toward your toes until you feel a stretch in your hamstrings. Hold for 30 seconds, breathing slowly and deepening the stretch on your exhales.

How to strengthen: Lie face down on an exercise ball with hips and torso supported on the ball and hands on the floor. Bend your knees, then squeeze your glutes to send your feet up toward the ceiling. Do two to three sets of eight to 12 reps.

While the squat test will help you evaluate your fitness and discover your body's weak spots, having a trained eye watch you in action can prove to be even more valuable since they know what to look for and the best ways to improve.

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